

Each summer, Newport, Rhode Island and Shimoda, her sister city, hold Black Ships Festivals to celebrate the friendship which began in 1854. Since its inception 15 years ago, the Black Ships Festival of Rhode Island has grown bigger and better every year, becoming a fixture on Newport's summer schedule and an event that the entire state eagerly awaits.

The Festival truly is one of Rhode Island's treasures. It provides residents and visitors to the Ocean State a unique and inexpensive opportunity to learn about and celebrate Japan's traditions and culture. As a result, I can honestly say that our state has gained a better awareness than most of Japanese culture.

The success of the Black Ships Festival of Rhode Island is now recognized far beyond the borders of the Ocean State. On July 1, the Japan-America Society of Rhode Island was selected to receive the prestigious Japanese "Minister of Foreign Affairs' Citation", which recognizes individuals and organizations that have contributed to friendship and understanding between Japan and other countries. Of the 9 organizations receiving this award in 1998, the Japan-America Society is the only one that is not Japanese.

Mr. President, as the Co-Chair of this year's Black Ships Festival of Rhode Island, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Japan America Society of Rhode Island for its tremendous efforts in organizing the Festival and strengthening the bond friendship between the United States and Japan.●

DETROIT LADY ROAD RUNNERS BASKETBALL TEAM

● Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise today to congratulate a very special group of girls in the metro Detroit area. The Detroit Lady Road Runners basketball team came in second place in the girls 12 and under division of the Police Athletic League. The girls are the only basketball team in the city that won second place in the state of Michigan in the girls 10 and under Amateur Athletic Union. They are now on their way to competing in the 1998 AAU National Championship in Orlando, Florida July 31-August 8th.

The Lady Road Runners, led by Coach Jeffery Cruse, have not only put forth a great effort toward sharpening their basketball skills, practicing four days a week, but also in raising funds by washing cars, selling hot dogs and holding raffles and walk-a-thons. These girls also work very hard in school and for their churches.

I want to wish this team the best of success in their effort to win a National Championship. I am confident that they will do an excellent job representing Detroit and the great State of Michigan.●

SAVING MEMORY

● Mr. ROBB. Mr. President, one of my constituents, Rabbi Israel Zoberman of

congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, VA, has recently published some thoughts arising from the release of a Vatican document. I would like to bring them to the attention of my colleagues, and ask that they appear in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at the appropriate juncture.

The article follows:

[From the Southern Virginia Jewish News, May 22, 1998]

SAVING MEMORY: A RABBI'S RESPONSE TO THE VATICAN

(By Rabbi Israel Zoberman)

The recent release of the long awaited Vatican document on the connection between the Holocaust and the Catholic Church almost coincides with the annual observance this season of the Shoah's tragedy, the enormity of which has turned it into the most defining event of the soon concluding 20th century, the bloodiest of all times.

While the document acknowledges a measure of Christian culpability for Jewish suffering, it falls short of a full apology, for the over-a-decade study of the trying theme is fraught with painful and embarrassing confrontations for the church, touching upon the historical rejectionist attitude by Christianity of Judaism and the Jewish people. No wonder that there were high expectations that the reached conclusions would fully reflect and respect the record of a troubling past reality in light of the subject's magnitude, as well as the breakthrough conciliatory accomplishments of the Second Vatican Council in the 60s and the unparalleled contribution of Pope John II, building upon the foundation laid by his great predecessor Pope John XXIII in dismissing Jewish responsibility for Jesus' execution and honoring Abraham's descendants. At stake was also the church's own need to come to grips with a burden weighing upon its conscience in a way demanding absolution from sins of both commission and omission, allowing for a renewed sense of integrity and reconciliation in an era of an unprecedented ecumenical spirit, where no longer can any faith claim an imperialistic role.

It seems that the controversial document could not escape internal political pressure and compromise along with vestiges of pre-Second Vatican thinking. Perhaps some of us within both the Jewish and Christian communities got a bit carried away in believing that the significant victories of the past several decades were free from roadblocks and unforeseen detours. How else explain the skirting of two central issues that the authors were surely aware of their persistent presence, that now more than ever will beg an unequivocal response. The fact that traditional anti-Semitism has its origins in two millennia of the church's anti-Jewish teachings, demonstrates contempt in word and deed for both the spiritual heritage from which ironically Christianity emerged, and the people who bore witness to the covenant they refused to abandon when threatened with expulsion, forced conversion and death itself. Is there any doubt that the Holocaust and anti-Semitism are intimately interwoven?

The second bone of contention is the role of Pope Pius XII whose silence during the Nazi slaughter was far louder than his intervention in saving individual lives. While there is no surprise that the church would want to defend her "infallible" leaders, it is the failure to exercise the vast moral authority invested in the Pope's high office which should serve as a cardinal yardstick in evaluating the legacy of any Holy Father, particularly under critical circumstances testing and mantle of true spiritual greatness. The

related concern of the Vatican's alleged involvement in aiding the escape of Nazis at the war's end to South America and elsewhere, deserves an honest investigation and disclosure. Only when past ghosts are finally laid to rest, can memory be cleansed to serve the future.

I trust that the contested official statement is not in its final form, for history and our common God expect more from us and we can deliver in this generation of unfathomable lows but also dazzling heights, a gift of healing hope for those to follow. I ought to know for during 1985 to 1995 my congregation benefitted from generosity of the most gracious Church of Ascension in Virginia Beach, where we found a loving home in the only such Catholic-Jewish sharing bond in the world, a direct outcome of a radically changed climate.

The Polish Pope, John Paul II, with his unique personality and past, did more than all other pontiffs combined to bring the two faith groups closer to one another, coming as he does from the vineyard turned graveyard of European Jewry, experiencing and resisting the German occupation, and being particularly close to a surviving Jewish childhood friend. His heartfelt embrace of the Jews, beginning in an historic first visit by a Pope to a synagogue, in 1986 in Rome, addressing them as "our dearly beloved brothers" and "our elder brothers," culminated in establishing diplomatic relations with the State of Israel in 1994. Before his extraordinary papacy comes to an end, he may yet surprise us with further bold steps to reassure us all that there is no retreat from the visionary path he so compassionately bequeathed to a suffering and expectant humanity.●

BICENTENNIAL OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

● Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I rise to commemorate the bicentennial of the Public Health Service. On July 16, 1798, the Fifth Congress passed, and President John Adams signed, an Act which established the Public Health Service. The Public Health Service was originally established to provide medical care to sick and disabled seamen. Today the scope of their service includes educational activities, the provision of medical care, and activities on the forefront of biomedical research. I commend the members of the Public Health Service not only for their commitment to public health, but also their willingness to serve, and to contribute to the prevention and eradication of diseases.

Before being elected to the Senate in 1994, I was a heart and lung transplant surgeon for many years. The question I'm most often asked is, "Why would you leave medicine for politics?" My simple answer is: I didn't "leave." I'm away only for awhile. The deeper answer is that while—on the surface—politics seems so different from medicine, the underlying motivation is exactly the same. Medicine exists to improve the life of another human being. The primacy of the patient is the central focus of all that physicians do. The same can be said of public service and public policy. They exist to serve the best interest of the citizenry. As a physician, I had the opportunity to help